

The Cohansey Baptist Church
Roadstown, Cumberland County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-463

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, P.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The Cohansey Baptist Church
Roadstown, Cumberland County, New Jersey

Owner: The Congregation of the Cohansey Baptist Church

Date of Erection: 1801

Architect:

Builder:

Present Condition: Very good

Number of Stories: One with gallery

Materials of Construction: Foundation - brick and stone

Exterior walls - brick

Interior walls - wainscot sill
high, plaster above

Inside brick chimney

Roof - pitch

Historical Data:

According to Elmer this was the first organized church in this region of which there is any authentic record. He adds that the Cohansey Presbyterian Church at Fairfield, NJ-273, is contemporary, if not earlier. Griffiths states that in 1683 the first Baptists from Clouketin, Tipperary County, Ireland, settled on the south side of the Cohansey River, and he claims they built a meeting house there on the farm of David Thomas. Elmer thinks that the church was formed about 1690; besides the Irish Baptist there were also Baptists from New England and Long Island. About 1700 the congregation moved to the north side of the river and

built a church two miles south of Roadstown. There is some discussion as to whether this is not too early a date. Griffiths also records a house of worship built in 1741 for the same congregation. A more central site was bought in 1799 and the present church was built about 1801 and dedicated in 1802. It was built under the pastorate of Henry Smalley of Piscataway, who accepted a call to the Cohansey Church in 1790.

Bibliography:

Griffiths, Thomas S. A History of Baptists in New Jersey Hightstown, Bar Press Publishing Company, 1904

Elmer, L. Q. C. History of the Early Settlement and Progress of Cumberland County, New Jersey Bridgeton, George F. Nixon, 1869



Supervising Historian

Approved:



SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, F.A.I.A.
District Officer

revised July 1938. JPD.